



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

Department of Toxic Substances Control

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Report on Suva School Investigation Completed

SACRAMENTO---- The California Environmental Protection Agency's Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) today released the Suva School Environmental Investigation Report (Report) concluding a multi-agency environmental investigation focused on the Suva Elementary and Suva Intermediate Schools, to determine if contaminants from Chrome Crankshaft, the adjacent chrome plating facility, had migrated to the school grounds and posed a health threat to students, faculty and community members.

The report includes the results of sampling activities conducted by DTSC, the California Air Resources Board (ARB) and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), a human health screening evaluation, conclusions and recommendations.

The report is intended to evaluate the current conditions at the Suva Elementary and Suva Intermediate Schools. Earlier this month, (January 5, 1999) DTSC formally requested the assistance of the Department of Health Services Environmental Health Investigation Branch to determine if community health complaints may be related to contaminants from local chrome plating facilities.

Conclusions and recommendations featured in the report include the following findings:

- Hexavalent chromium, the primary contaminant of concern, tested safe on the school ground soils and classrooms.
- Drinking water from water fountains at Suva met state and federal drinking water standards.
- Preliminary air sampling showed that cancer risk, via direct inhalation air pathway, is 4.1 excess cancers in a population of 100,000, a level that DTSC is requiring the facility to reduce.
- Lead abatement programs should be coordinated through the Los Angeles Childhood Lead Poison Prevention Program.

- M O R E -

“Although we have submitted this report and completed our investigation at the school complex, our work at Chrome Crankshaft is far from done,” said Jesse R. Huff, DTSC Director. “We recently issued enforcement orders to the facility requiring cleanup and will be working to develop a comprehensive Risk Assessment to examine the air, soil and groundwater affected by the facility’s operation.”

The environmental investigation included sampling of soils in the school complex play area, wipe sampling inside classrooms, sampling of vacuum cleaner dust bags, sampling of school water fountains, air sampling in the elementary school yard, sampling of soils from nearby homes and soil sampling at Chrome Crankshaft.

Hazardous substances revealed at Chrome Crankshaft during the investigation included lead, nickel, cadmium, chromium, hexavalent chromium, mercury and zinc. These substances represent a threat to human health through ingestion, inhalation and dermal contact.

The report is now available for public review at the following repositories at:

- Bell Gardens Library
7110 Garfield Avenue
Bell Gardens, CA 90201
- Commerce Central Library
5655 Jillson Street
Commerce, CA 90040

DTSC is one of the six boards and Departments within the California Environmental Protection Agency.

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